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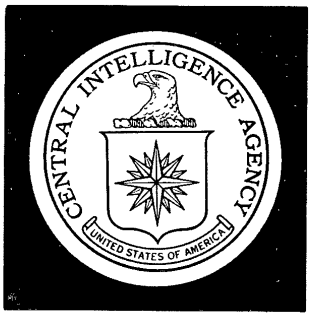

The President's Daily Brief

12 August 1969

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Top Secret 50X1

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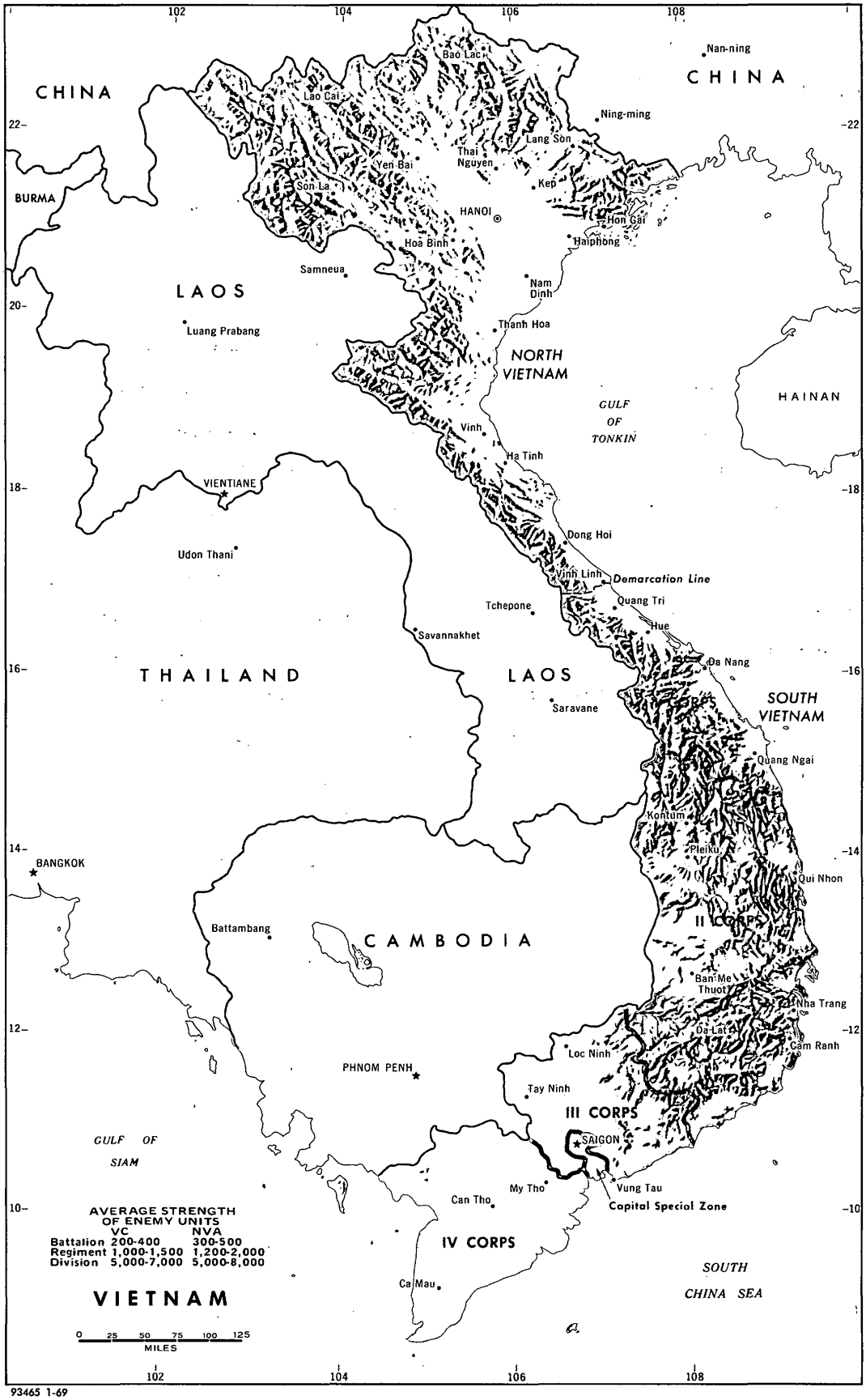

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VIETNAM

Communist forces shelled over 100 allied targets last night and also carried out some ground attacks. In the ground fighting, directed mainly against US positions near the Cambodian border in the northern III Corps area, preliminary reports put US casualties at 28 killed and 187 wounded, compared with 240 enemy killed.

The shelling has been fairly light. A few rockets were launched against targets on the outskirts of Saigon, Hue, and Da Nang without serious effect.

This latest Communist "high point" was preceded by weekend attacks near the Demilitarized Zone, against US positions in Tay Ninh Province, and against South Vietnamese army units in coastal Binh Thuan Province. The ground actions, along with the shellings, may indicate the start of the enemy's "autumn offensive," expected to occur around two major Communist holidays in mid-August and early September. Communist units are in position to launch followup attacks in many parts of the country.

South Vietnam's three major cities do not seem to be under major ground threat, but they could come under terrorist harassment. There are many indications that the Communists intend to emphasize guerrilla and sapper operations in their coming drive.

SOVIET AFFAIRS

Flight activity within all Soviet air components resumed

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yesterday, but at levels somewhat lower than normal for a Monday.

* * *

ZOND-7, the unmanned lunar probe, has gone around the moon and is now on its way back. It should return to earth on Thursday. [redacted] 50X1

[redacted] 50X1

[redacted] If all continues to go well, the Soviets could send a crew around the moon in September. 50X1

MIDDLE EAST

Israeli troops fired a "few shots" at the small party of Jordanians which came to inspect the damaged East Ghor Canal, in spite of threats by King Husayn's spokesman that such action would result in escalation of the conflict to unprecedented levels. The Israelis are demanding "suitable guarantees"--unspecified--that Jordan will restrain terrorists and the Jordanian army in exchange for permission to repair the canal without interference. Leaders of both Jordan and Israel seem totally unyielding in their demands on each other, and emotions are so high on both sides that serious fighting may break out.

NIGERIA

Military leaders are becoming more and more gloomy over the federal forces' inability to defeat Biafra or even

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to interdict the secessionists' arms supply airstrips. Coup rumors abound in Lagos [redacted] 50X1 50X1

[redacted] 50X1

GUYANA

Prime Minister Forbes Burnham and the other leaders of his government fear that "hawks" in Venezuela will seize the disputed territory that makes up the western two-thirds of Guyana. This concern has probably been heightened by what the Guyanese consider the easy treatment given El Salvador by the OAS.

Lacking the military strength to forestall Venezuela, the Guyanese are considering ways to build up political support in the rest of the world. [redacted] 50X1

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